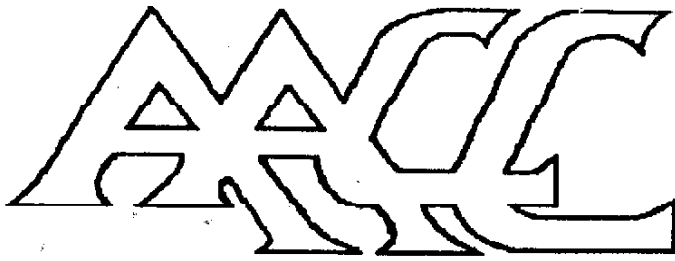


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AIRPORT AREA COMPUTER CLUB
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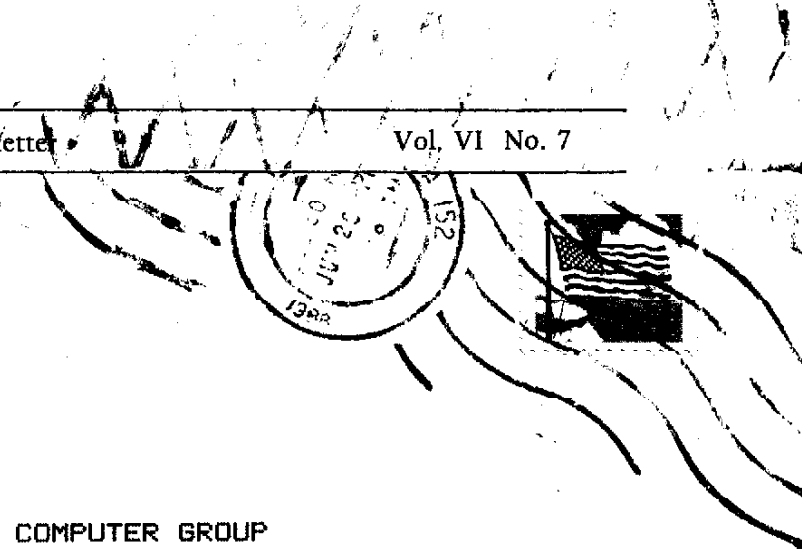
NEXT MEETING: 6:30 PM Sunday August 7, 1988 at the John Jay building, Room 22, at Robert Morris College. Ask the guard for directions from the entrance road.

July 1988

Newsletter

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Airport Area Computer Club
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The second game on the Disk of the Month was Oh Mummy!, another West German programming achievement. It involves trips through successive mazes to find treasures and escape getting killed by guards. It is quite well programmed, with good graphics and sound, and the idea is sufficiently well executed to keep the players attention. It permits choiocs of difficulty, including what seems to be impossible speeds. Well worth trying for any game player.

While waiting for the members to arrive I ran a music program which I had shown before. Several of the members had not been at that meeting and later made copies for their own collections. I also brought along STAR (Super TI Assembly Routines), which a couple of members wanted, and TI-Keys, a Macro program for the TI99/4A. Thus there was something for everyone.

Last Month's Meeting

I was happy to see a number of members at the June meeting who had not been with us for a couple of months. At the close of the meeting we voted to take our customary summer break and skip the July meeting. Our next meeting will be August 7, at 6:30 PM as usual. Although the tradition in the computer industry is for a lag in software introductions in the summer, perhaps this year will be the exception and we will have some exciting introductions for the next meeting.

I demonstrated a number of game programs at the June meeting. First I showed two game cartridges, beginning with "Strike Three", a baseball simulation. The game can be played by one or two players, one controlling the pitcher, the other controlling the batter. With a single player, the computer controls the batter. The screen has an inset square in which we look from behind the pitcher toward the batter and catcher. The pitcher is given a number of options on a menu: speed of pitch; low, middle, high; and curve; after which striking any key sends the pitch on its way. The pitch is seen rather realistically on the screen, and the text appears announcing the result of the pitch: strike, ball, or a hit with the result. Should a batter reach a base, a right hand overhead graphic shows a player on base, but there is no animation at all, and none of the fielders are on the screen at any time. The game very much reminded me of the crude early BASIC games in which you went to bat and the totally text oriented screen told you what result you got. While the graphics of the pitching is good, the game produced instant boredom for me and I didn't recognize any enthusiasm from the members present. When your side goes to bat, you have a choice of aiming high, middle, of low and controlling when you swing by hitting the key when you think you should. There is a good image of the shadow of the ball on the ground as it moves toward the plate to help the batter know when to swing. My verdict: Strike Three struck out.

The second game was advertised as NEW! by Triton, and described as a trip through a maze chazed by things. Jumpy turned out to be the hundreth knock-off of Qbert, and the screen showed it to be a 1983 production. Most of the members present owned a disk version of the game from the old days. The actual rendition of the game was quite good, but if you already own a dozen version of Qbert you couldn't possibly be interested in buying another. It is possible that Triton didn't know what it was selling, and the company can always claim that it was "NEW" to their catalog, but I feel that they were falsely advertising, and we have enough problems in TI land without adding that situation.

The third game was Freddy. Yes, we had tried a previous meeting to demonstrate the game and found the disk had become corrupted, and then in May we finally showed a working version of the game. It was demonstrated in June as it was part of the Disk of the Month, and was a copyable version which worked after copying. To my great surprise I escaped from the initial maze in no time flat. Fortunately, a couple of the members present had not previously seen the game demonstrated.